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Clarke Press Release

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DETROIT LEGISLATOR TELLS VIDEO GAMING INDUSTRY TO CLEAN UP ITS ACT... OR ELSE **Senator Clarke Threatens Ban on Violent Video Games like *Grand Theft Auto***

LANSING- State Senator Hansen Clarke (D-Detroit) sent a not-so-subtle message to the video gaming industry today by announcing that he will introduce legislation that would ban the sale of excessively violent video games like *Grand Theft Auto*, *San Andreas* in the state of Michigan. Sen. Clarke stated that the video gaming industry is not behaving ethically or responsibly in the design of these violent games and that it is time to send a clear message that business-as-usual will not be tolerated.

“Based on the video gaming industry’s record of developing and heavily promoting excessively violent games, I no longer believe the industry can effectively police itself,” said Clarke. “I hope to make this the last Christmas season that extremely violent games like *Grand Theft Auto*, *San Andreas* are on wish list of Michigan’s children.”

“Excessively violent games desensitize our children toward violence by rewarding the gamer for killing or maiming others,” said Senator Clarke. “I think most responsible adults would agree that society would be better off without games that encourage indiscriminate violence and destruction.”

Senator Clarke's comments were directed at video games like the *Grand Theft Auto* series in which gamers are allowed to carjack automobiles, kill police officers and innocent bystanders, and to solicit prostitutes. In the game, players are offered a wide range of weapons with which to wreck havoc on the community, including baseball bats, chain saws and sniper rifles.

"This issue is not about being conservative or progressive," said Clarke. "This is about sending a clear message to the video gaming industry that we expect them to behave ethically and responsibly and to not produce or promote products that adversely impact the public good."

In addition to a possible ban on the sale of such games, Sen. Clarke indicated that he intends to introduce several other bills dealing with the regulation of the video gaming industry. Sen. Clarke intends to introduce legislation in the new session that will establish a state minimum age for buying or renting adult-rated video games, similar to the current age limit on the purchasing of alcohol or tobacco. He also intends to introduce legislation that will establish criminal penalties for retailers who knowingly sell mature-rated games to underage children.

Please Note: You can download an audio file of Senator Clarke commenting on this subject at:
<http://www.senate.mi.gov/Audio%20Clips/01-122204.wav>